NUMB. CLXXIII.

The GUARDIAN.

——— Nec ſera comantem
Narciſſum, aut flexi tacuiſſem Vimen Acanthi,
Pallenteſque Hæderas, & amantes littora myrtos. Virg.

Tueſday, September 29. 1713.

I Lately took a particular Friend of mine to my Houſe in the Country, not without ſome Apprehenſion that it could afford little Entertainment to a Man of his Polite Taſte, particularly in Architecture and Gardening, who had ſo long been converſant with all that is beautiful and great in either. But it was a pleaſant Surprize to me, to hear him often declare, he had found in my little Retirement that Beauty which he always thought wanting in the moſt celebrated Seats, or if you will Villa's, of the Nation. This he deſcribed to me in thoſe Verſes with which *Martial* begins one of his Epigrams:

Baiana noſtri Villa, Baſſe, Fauſtini,
Non otioſis ordinata myrtetis,
Viduaque platano, tonſilique buxeto,
Ingrata lati ſpatia detinet campi,
Sed rure vero, barbaroque *lætatur.*

There is certainly ſomething in the amiable Simplicity of unadorned Nature, that ſpreads over the Mind a more noble ſort of Tranquility, and a loftier Senſation of Pleaſure, than can be raiſed from the nicer Scenes of Art.

This was the Taſte of the Ancients in their Gardens, as we may diſcover from the Deſcriptions are extant of them. The two moſt celebrated Wits of the World have each of them left us a particular Picture of a Garden; wherein thoſe great Maſters, being wholly unconfined, and Painting at Pleaſure, may be thought to have given a full Idea of what they eſteemed moſt excellent in this way. Theſe (one may obſerve) conſiſt intirely of the uſeful Part of Horticulture, Fruit Trees, Herbs, Water, &c. The Pieces I am ſpeaking of are *Virgil*'s Account of the Garden of the old *Corycian*, and *Homer*'s of that of *Alcinous*. The firſt of theſe is already known to the *Engliſh* Reader, by the excellent Verſions of Mr. *Dryden* and Mr. *Addiſon*. The other having never been attempted in our Language with any Elegance, and being the moſt beautiful Plan of this ſort that can be imagined, I ſhall here preſent the Reader with a Tranſlation of it.

(Price Two Pence.)

The Gardens of *Alcinous*, from *Homer*'s *Odyſs.* 7.

Cloſe to the Gates a ſpacious Garden lies,
From Storms defended and inclement Skies:
Four Acres was th' allotted Space of Ground,
Fenc'd with a green Incloſure all around.
Tall thriving Trees confeſt the fruitful Mold;
The red'ning Apple ripens here to Gold,
Here the blue Figg with luſcious Juice o'erflows,
With deeper Red the full Pomegranate glows,
The Branch here bends beneath the weighty Pear,
And verdant Olives flouriſh round the Year.
The balmy Spirit of the Weſtern Gale
Eternal breathes on Fruits untaught to fail:
Each dropping Pear a following Pear ſupplies,
On Apples Apples, Figs on Figs ariſe:
The ſame mild Seaſon gives the Blooms to blow,
The Buds to harden, and the Fruits to grow.

Here order'd Vines in equal Ranks appear
With all th' United Labours of the Year,
Some to unload the fertile Branches run,
Some dry the black'ning Cluſters in the Sun,
Others to tread the liquid Harveſt join,
The groaning Preſſes foam with Floods of Wine.
Here are the Vines in early Flow'r deſcry'd,
Here Grapes diſcolour'd on the ſunny Side,
And there in Autumn's richeſt Purple dy'd.

Beds of all various Herbs, for ever green,
In beauteous Order terminate the Scene.

Two plenteous Fountains the whole Proſpect crown'd;
This thro' the Gardens leads its Streams around,
Viſits each Plant, and waters all the Ground:
While that in Pipes beneath the Palace flows,
And thence its Current on the Town beſtows;
To various Uſe their various Streams they bring,
The People one, and one ſupplies the King.

Sir *William Temple* has remark'd, that this Deſcription contains all the juſteſt Rules and Proviſions which can go toward compoſing the beſt Gardens.